

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: Cluster Analysis of MMPI-A Profiles in Court-Involved Youth

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The present study sought to expand the research by exploring the subgroups that emerge using cluster analysis of Court Involved Youth (CIY), referred by the Juvenile Justice System (JJS) and Child Welfare System (CWS), using the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-Adolescent (MMPI-A). This study utilized archival data from an original sample ($N = 354$) of CIY referred for diagnostic testing in a Midwestern state. After removing participants who did not receive the MMPI-A and who did not produce valid MMPI-A profiles, a two-step cluster analysis was conducted with the remaining 179 participants using Ward's (1963) hierarchical cluster analysis utilizing the MMPI-A clinical scales to determine cluster membership. Outliers were removed based on Mahalanobis and Cooke's distances, leaving 113 participants. Two through eight cluster solutions were examined, and a four cluster solution was deemed most appropriate. This study described the MMPI-A clinical scale profiles of these four groups and their demographic, diagnostic, and Cattell-Horn-Carroll (CHC) cognitive abilities profile composition. MAC-R scales were also examined for each of the four groups. When analyzing the final sample, the Psychopathic Deviate (Pd) scale was moderately elevated. However, a variety of clinical scale elevations emerged when analyzing the MMPI-A clinical profiles based on group membership. Groups included a distinct Psychopathic Deviate (Pd) scale elevation and

moderate MAC-R elevation, a group with a Depression (D) scale elevation and moderate Psychopathic Deviate (Pd) elevation, and two groups with Average MMPI-A clinical profiles. All groups had mean CHC ability profiles in the Low Average to Average range. Further research may seek to examine the MMPI-A Restructured Form (MMPI-A-RF) profiles of CIY, especially after Family First legislation is implemented.

Keywords: court-involved youth, juvenile justice, child welfare, MMPI-A